



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Friday, October 21, 2005

ARIZONA TO RECEIVE FEDERAL TRAINING GRANT
Funds earmarked to train technology workers in Arizona

PHOENIX – Governor Janet Napolitano today announced Arizona will receive a \$3.4 million grant from the U.S. Department of Labor to increase the number of qualified IT workers in Arizona. The grant will fund the development of new curricula in software quality engineering (SQE)) for Arizona community colleges.

“Training more people to work in high tech jobs is an important part of our economic development,” Governor Napolitano said. “As Arizona’s population continues to grow, more cutting edge technology corporations relocate or expand to the state, it is essential that we have plenty of people prepared to work in the technology sector.”

The grant is part of the President’s High Growth Job Training Initiative, a program that prepares workers for new careers in expanding technology industries. Under this initiative, \$8 million has been invested in the IT sector of the American economy.

The Arizona Information Technology Skills Training Initiative will be implemented through a coordinated effort of IBM, Northland Pioneer College, Mesa Community College and the Arizona Department of Commerce. This public-private partnership will create a technical development team to develop educational materials for approximately 20 community college instructors to use to teach three new SQE courses to more than 1,500 individuals during the next three years. Upon successful completion of the program, students will earn industry-recognized certifications.

“We are privileged to partner with IBM and the Arizona Department of Commerce to empower our local workforce with the advanced IT skills and education that will be critical to the economic development of this region,” said Dr. Pinny Sheoran, Director of the Business and Industry Institute of Mesa Community College’s Downtown Campus.

“Workers in rural Arizona, especially those in the tribal nations served by Northland Pioneer College, are eager to acquire the skills needed by the information technology industry,” said Peggy Belknap, dean of Workforce Development at Northland Pioneer College. “We are excited to be providing a certification program of this caliber, especially in our remote service area.”